

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 00420 240646Z

17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-10 SCCT-01

SY-05 OMB-01 SAM-01 AID-05 USSS-00 SCA-01 /090 W

----- 069855

O 240700Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2737

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANAA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L 0420

E.O. 11652; GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SO, FR, FT

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR

BEGIN SUMMARY

1. FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO SOMALIA JEAN GUEURY WAS KIDNAPPED BY MEMBERS OF DJIBOUTI LIBERATION FRONT (DLF) AO APPROXIMATELY 1900 LOCAL MARCH 23 AS HE LEFT CHURCH SERVICES IN DOWNTOWN MOGADISCIO. AS OF 0700 HRS. MARCH 24, GUEURY STILL IN DLF CUSTODY AT THEIR HQS IN MOGADISCIO, WHICH IS SURROUNDED BY SOMALI POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES. GUEURY IS UNHARMED AND HAS SPOKEN ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO HIS WIFE, MOST RECENTLY AT 0700 HRS LOCAL. IT IS NOT RPT NOT CLEAR WHAT DLF WANTS IN ADDITION TO PUBLICITY IT HAS ALREADY RECEIVED. CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING GUERRY'S ABDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENTS THUS FAR SUGGEST PUBLICITY IS PRIMARY MOTIVE AND THAT GUEURY WILL BE RELEASED UNHARMED. WE ALSO SUSPECT THAT AFFAIR MAY BE RELATED TO INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE GOING ON IN MOGADISCIO. SIAD'S CONNECTION WITH THIS DLF COUPE DE THEATRE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOGADI 00420 240646Z

NOT YET ENTIRELY CLEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO SOMALIA JEAN GUEURY WAS KIDNAPPED BY THREE ARMED MEMBERS OF DJIBOUTI LIBERATION FRONT (DLF) AS HE LEFT CHURCH SERVICE IN MIDTOWN MOGADISCIO AT APPROXIMATELY 1900 HRS. LOCAL MARCH 23. ABDUCTION WAS WITNESSED BY SCORES OF ONLOOKERS FROM BOTH EUROPEAN AND SOMALI COMMUNITY. TO ATTRACT ADDITIONAL NOTICE, ABDUCTORS FIRED THREE SHOTS IN AIR BEFORE SPEEDING OFF WITH GUEURY IN TOYOTA TO THEIR DLF HQS IN MOGADISCIO, WHERE GUEURY IS STILL BEING DETAINED AS OF 0700 HRS MARCH 24.

3. SAME EVENING AT APPROXIMATELY 2015 HRS. MRS. GUEURY RECEIVED CALL FROM HER HUSBAND'S ABDUCTORS AND WAS TOLD ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO SOMALIA TO ACT AS INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN DLF AND PARIS. GUEURY BEING HELD AT DLF HQS IN MOGADISCIO, WHICH IS SURROUNDED BY SOMALI POLICE FORCES. MRS. GUEURDY HAS SPOKEN TO HER HUSBAND ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. SHE SPOKE TO HIM MOST RECENTLY AT APPROXIMATELY 0700 HRS THIS MORNING. HE IS UNHARMED AND, IN HIS MOST RECENT REQUEST, WANTED A THERMOS OF TEA AND HIS SHAVING KIT, WHICH SHE SENT ALONG. HE ALSO ASKED HER TO TELL ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO QTE HURRY UNQTE WITH NEGOTIATIONS.

4. EXACT NATURE OF NEGOTIATIONS ARE UNCLEAR. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN WAITING FOR ANOTHER CALL FROM DLF AT 0600 HRS THIS MORNING MARCH 24 BUT THIS DID NOT RPT NOT COME. WE UNDERSTAND HE HAS SENT MESSAGE TO GOF IN PARIS THROUGH ITALIAN EMBASSY HERE ON BEHALF OF DLF ABDUCTORS BUT REPLY HAS NOT RPT NOT BEEN RECEIVED.

5. CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING GUEURY'S ABDUCTION RAISE SOME QUESTION ABOUT DLF INTENTIONS. IN SEIZING GUEURY ON CROWDED DOWNTOWN STREET AT END OF CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVICES, THEY MADE CERTAIN THAT ABDUCTION WAS GIVEN MAXIMUM LOCAL PUBLICITY. ALSO, IN RETREATING WITH THEIR HOSTAGE TO DLF HQS, THEY ALSO INDICATED THAT SECRECY OR CONCEALMENT WAS NOT AN IMPORTANT FACTOR TO THEIR SCENARIO. GUEURY MOREOVER HAS BEEN WELL TREATED AND ANY MENTAL UNCERTAINTYZHIS FAMILY OR EMBASSY STAFF MIGHT HAVE SUFFERED HAS BEEN EASED BY HIS OCCASIONAL TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS WITH HIS WIFE, WHO HAS SENT HIM TOBACCO, FOOD AND DRINK, ETC.

6. WE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT PRINCIPAL DLF OBJECTIVE
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PAGE 03 MOGADI 00420 240646Z

IS PUBLICITY WHICH WILL BE GIVEN THEIR CAUSE BOTH IN SOMALIA AS WELL AS ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA AND EUROPE. DLF GROUP MEMBERS IN MOGADISCIO MOREOVER ARE ESSENTIALLY WHITE COLLAR ACTIVITS, MORE ACCUSTOMED TO LOBBYING WITH OAU LIB COMMITTEE AND OTHER SYMPATHETIC GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACIES THAN WITH SHOWING THEI DUBIOUS GUERRILLA MUSCLE. AS TERRORITSTS OR INSURGENTS, THEY COMPARE IN NO WAY EITHER WITH PLO OR WITH ELF/PLF.

7. WE ARE LESS CERTAIN OF GSDR ROLE IN DLF ABDUCTION. DLF HAS BEEN AN INSTRUMENT OF GSDR POLICY ON DJIBOUTI AND HAS LITTLE OR NO AUTONOMY BEYOND THAT GSDR WILLING TO GRANT IT. A MONTH AGO, WE WOULD HAVE INSISTED THAT ANY INITIATIVE DLF UNDERTOOK IN MOGADISCIO OR ELSEWHERE WOULD HAVE REQUIRED GSDR APPROVAL. BECUASE OF LOCAL POWER STRUGGLE WHICH HAS BEEN GOING ON BEHIND SCENES THESE PAST TEN DAYS, HOWEVER, WE ARE NOW LESS SURE OF THAT ASSUMPTION. IT SEEMS TO US THAT GUEURY ABDUCTION MAY BE PART OF CURRENT POLITICAL MANEUVERING IN MOGADISCIO, WHICH IS SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL.

8. GSDR GAVE FULL PUBLICITY TO GUEURY ABDUCTION ON FRONT PAGE OF SOMALI NEWS AGENCY BULLETING MORNING OF MARCH 24.
HAMRICK

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